



# America Next to You

Discovering USA

NO. 1

OCTOBER 2007

## OCTOBER EVENTS:

- Halloween
- Columbus Day

## EVENTS IN CLUJ-NAPOCA

- Transilvania Jazz Festival
- Beyoncé Concert

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## Halloween

The origin of Halloween is complex and uncertain. The most common version is that Halloween originates in the Celtic Samhain festival which, on November 1, marked the Celtic New Year and also the day when dead souls revisit Earth. But the name "Halloween" has Christian origins, due to the Roman Catholic Church's efforts to stop non-Christian celebrations by incorporating them in the Christian calendar. In 731 A.D., November 1 was declared All Saints' Day (All Hallows Day) and thus, October 31 became All Hallows Eve, shortened in time to Halloween. In Ireland, the name of the holiday was All Hallows' Eve (often shortened to Hallow Eve), and though seldom used today, the name is still well-accepted, albeit somewhat esoteric. In Irish, the festival is known as Oíche Shamhna (Night of Samhain), or simply Samhain; in Scottish Gaelic Samhainn or Samhain; in Welsh, Calan Gaeaf; "Allantide" to the Cornish and "Hop-tu-Naa" to the Manx.

Trick-or-treating might be linked to the Samhain traditions and thus became popular when Irish began immigrating to the United States in large numbers; it also



may be a relatively recent phenomenon (the 1930's), coinciding with population shifts from rural to urban and suburban environments. Many folklorists see in Halloween a connection to England's Guy Fawkes Day (Nov. 5), the commemoration of a failed attempt to blow up the king and Parliament (the Gunpowder Plot, 1605). Halloween may also be related to early American harvest festivals.

There are three major Halloween symbols: symbols of death: graveyards, ghosts, skeletons, haunted houses; symbols of evil and misfortune: witches, goblins, black cats; symbols of harvest: pumpkins, scarecrows, corn stocks and candy corn.

The event involves decorations, candy, costumes and many other consumer products. Halloween is a marketer's dream, reported to be the fastest-growing retail season. House and party decorations are also sold briskly nationwide. A change in the U.S. Halloween customs is an increasing tendency to regard the holiday as one also for adults. It became, alongside with New Year's Eve and Super Bowl Sunday, one of the most popular party dates for American adults.

### Bibliography:

1. *What's Behind Halloween. Where Our Weird Rituals Originated*, by Ken C. Erickson and Patricia Sunderland (Special to The Washington Post, Wednesday, October 14, 1998)
2. Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia
3. [www.halloween.com](http://www.halloween.com)

## Columbus Day



A sailor on board the Pinta sighted land early in the morning of October 12, 1492, and a new era of European exploration and expansion began. The next day, the 90 crew members of Christopher Columbus's three-ship fleet ventured onto the Bahamian island of Guanahani, ending a voyage begun nearly ten weeks earlier in Palos, Spain. The 400th anniversary of the event inspired

the first official Columbus Day holiday in the United States. In 1892, President Benjamin Harrison issued a proclamation urging Americans to mark the day. The public responded enthusiastically, organizing school programs, plays, and community festivities across the country. Over the following decades, the Knights of

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## Halloween Quiz



1. The tradition of dressing up started because:  
a. We try to scare away evil spirits; b. It's a way to honor the dead; c. The evil spirits would not recognize us
2. The Celts believed that the lord of the dead traveled on the earth on Halloween. What was his name?  
a. Lord Seamus; b. Lord Samhain; c. Lord Shaney
3. What does the Old English word "hallow" mean?  
a. Spirit; b. Saint; c. Spook
4. People in which country celebrate their culture's Halloween by eating candy skulls?  
a. Mexico; b. Scotland; c. Italy
5. What priests first celebrated what now we know as Halloween?  
a. The Druids; b. The Christians; c. The Romans
6. At Halloween parties, guests "bob" for:  
a. Turnips; b. Skulls; c. Apples
7. The Celts celebrated their new year on: a. October 13th; b. December 21st; c. January 1st; d. November 1st
8. Which custom began as a way to find out who will get married first?  
a. Trick or treating; b. Bobbing for apples; c. Jack o'lanterns
9. Another name for Halloween is:  
a. The Feast of the Dead; b. Samhain; c. All Hallows Eve; d. All of the above
10. Halloween is celebrated every:  
a. October 1st; b. October 15th; c. October 31st

The correct answers are: 1c, 2b, 3a, 4a, 5a, 6c, 7d, 8b, 9d, 10c.

**"Billy Cobham is one of the world's best and most influential drummers known for his jazz fusion in the 1970s, with John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra, where he pioneered a powerful style of drumming with jazz, rock and funk influences".** (Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia)

## Transilvania Jazz Festival

Our town will host between 10 and 14 October Transilvania Jazz Festival. It will be a very good and interesting occasion to see and hear a lot of Romanian and worldwide musicians and jazz groups (from US, Belgium, France, Canada, Poland, Czech Republik, Germany, Nederland, Sweden, Hungary). The most important guests are: Billy Cobham (USA), one of the world's best drummers,

Johnny Raducanu and Teodora Enache (Romania). Besides concerts and jamsessions, there will be a round of masterclasses sustained by Olivier Gatto & Fred Borey, Camelia Ben Naceur & Giovanni Amato, Jean-Francois Maljean, Billy Cobham, Regis Huiban. If you want to find more information about this event, here is the official site of the festival: [www.transilvaniajazzfestival.ro](http://www.transilvaniajazzfestival.ro)



Billy Cobham performing at Baku Jazz Festival 2007 (Source: Wikipedia)

**Beyoncé** performing "Listen" during her "The Beyoncé Experience" tour in Munich (Germany)  
**Source:** Wikipedia



## Beyoncé Concert

On October 22, 2007, the American R&B singer, songwriter, actress, dancer and fashion designer Beyoncé Giselle Knowles, who earned ten Grammy Award, will perform in Cluj-Napoca, at "Ion Moina" Stadium.

Beyoncé rose to fame as lead singer of the R&B girl group Destiny's Child, the world's best-selling female group of all time. Her debut solo album, "Dangerously in Love", was released in June 2003 and became one of the biggest commercial successes of the year. Cluj-Napoca's concert is part of world tour "The Beyoncé Experience" who promote her second album,

"B'Day", released in 2006, at her twenty-fifth birthday. The album has been certified triple platinum in the U.S. for shipments of over three million copies. Also, it had a huge worldwide success, selling seven million copies.

Source: local press, Wikipedia

# Columbus Day



**Columbus Landing at Guanahani**  
(painting by John Vanderlyn, 1775-1852)

Since 1971 Columbus Day, designated as the second Monday in October, has been celebrated as a federal holiday.

Today, many Americans celebrate Columbus Day as a day of rest and relaxation.

Also known as Discoverers' Day or Pioneers' Day, Columbus Day is a holiday celebrated in many countries in the Americas, commemorating the date of Christopher Columbus's arrival

in the New World on October 12, 1492. Similar holidays, celebrated as Día de la Raza (Day of the People) in many countries in Latin America (Argentina in 1917, Venezuela in 1921, Chile in 1923, and Mexico in 1928), Día de las Culturas (Day of the Cultures) in Costa Rica, Discovery Day in the Bahamas, Día de la Hispanidad in Spain (the national day of Spain), and the newly-renamed (as of 2002) Día de la Resistencia Indígena (Day of Indigenous Resistance) in Venezuela, commemorate the same event.

## Bibliography:

1. The Library of Congress, American Memory
2. Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia

(continued from page 1)

Columbus, an international Roman Catholic fraternal benefit society, lobbied state legislatures to declare October 12 a legal holiday. Colorado was the first state to do so on April 1, 1907.

**"Today's ceremony marks an important achievement for both the United States and Romania. We are bringing our justice and law enforcement partnership, which is already thriving, fully into the 21st century".**

**US Ambassador NICHOLAS F. TAUBMAN at the signing ceremony of the twin agreements USA-Romania, September 10, 2007**

## Important events US - Romania

- On September 10, 2007, were signed The United States-Romania Extradition Treaty and The Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty Protocol. The treaties will enable both governments to cooperate more effectively regarding the justice and combat of the international terrorism.
- Ford Motor Company representatives and the Government of Romania signed on September 12, 2007, a purchase agreement regarding Automobile Craiova.

- The American Ambassador in Romania, Nicholas F. Taubman, submit on the occasion of The Biotechnology Workshop held at Romanian Academy in Bucharest (September 18, 2007) the fact that The European Union prohibition of the genetically modified seed is not a good one and that millions of Americans have safely enjoyed genetically modified products.
- On September 24, 2007, U.S. Ambassador to Romania Nicholas F. Taubman signed agreements to confer two U.S. Trade and Develop-

ment Agency grants, awarded to the Romanian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and to the Romanian Ministry of Education, Research and Youth. The first grant (\$385,772), will assist Romania in complying with the European Union's Water Framework Directive, helping monitor and abate erosion along the Black Sea coastline; the second grant (\$366,841) will be used to assist upgrading existing information technology networks, by establishing an Integrated Network for Education and Technologies (INET).

## This month in the US history

### Births

- October 1 (1924): **James Earl "Jimmy" Carter**, the thirty-ninth President of the US, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize
- October 3 (1928): **Alvin Toffler**, writer, futurist
- October 3 (1925): **Gore Vidal**, writer
- October 10 (1917): **Thelonious Sphere Monk**, jazzman
- October 16 (1888): **Eugene Gladstone O'Neill**, Nobel Prize-

- winning playwright
- October 17 (1915): **Arthur Asher Miller**, playwright, essayist
- October 21 (1917): **John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie**, jazzman
- October 27 (1858): **Theodore Roosevelt**, the twenty-sixth President of the US
- October 28 (1955): **Bill Gates** (William Henry Gates III), entrepreneur, philanthropist, chairman of Microsoft

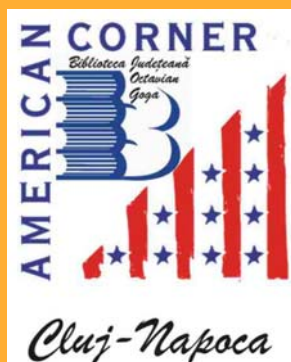
### Events

- October 12 (1492): Christopher Columbus arrived in Bahamas
- October 28 (1886): The Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World, a gift from the people of France, was dedicated in New York Harbor by President Grover Cleveland



The Statue of Liberty  
(Source: Wikipedia)





## Cluj County Library

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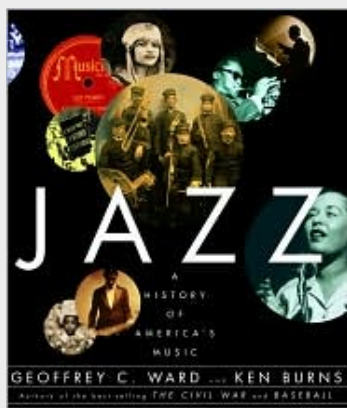
We're on the web!  
[www.bjc.ro/cic.html](http://www.bjc.ro/cic.html)

American Corner Cluj-Napoca is a result of a partnership between US Embassy at Bucharest and "Octavian Goga" Cluj County Library. Opened in December 2006, the American Corner is an information and resource center for the public of all ages interested in US life and culture.



"America Next to You. Discovering USA" is an electronic publication of American Corner Cluj-Napoca. It is published monthly. If you want to contribute, please send us an e-mail.

## American Corner Cluj-Napoca Collection

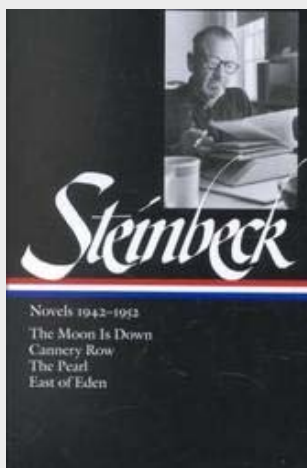


Ward, Geoffrey C., Burns, Ken. **Jazz. A History of America's Music.** New York: Knopf, 2000

This is the history of a music born in the black community of New Orleans, but played from the beginning by musicians of every color, which echoes the history of 20<sup>th</sup> century America.

The book, with its stories and more than five hundred photographs, some never before published, presents the extraordinary jazz men and women, from Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington to Billie Holiday, Miles Davis, Dizzy

Gillespie, Ella Fitzgerald, John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman and many more others.



Steinbeck, John. **Novels, 1942-1952.** New York: The Library of America, 2001

"**Novels, 1942-1952**" is the third of Steinbeck's volumes published by The Library of America and includes four of his most beloved works: "The Moon is Down", "Cannery Row", "The Pearl" and "East of Eden". "The Moon is Down" presents the story of a village from a country

in the northern Europe during Nazi occupation. It is presumed that it's about Norway and that's why in 1945 Steinbeck received the Haakon VII Medal of Freedom for his literary contributions to the Norwegian resistance movement. Because of the Nazi soldiers' portrayals made by Steinbeck, the novel was banned in Italy; the punishment for reading it was death. "Cannery Row" describes the lives of the locals and the collective life of the Cannery Row. This novel was dedicated to Steinbeck's friend and mentor, Ed Ricketts. "The Pearl" tells the story of a poor diver who finds a magnificent pearl, his and his family life after finding it; this novel is about poverty and wealth, about appreciating the really important things in life. For the novel "East of Eden", Steinbeck was inspired by the story of Cain and Abel from the Bible. He called this novel "the story of my country and the story of me". All of these novels were made into movies and some of them were adapted for theatre.